

Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

An outstanding wildlife sanctuary
within the City of New York



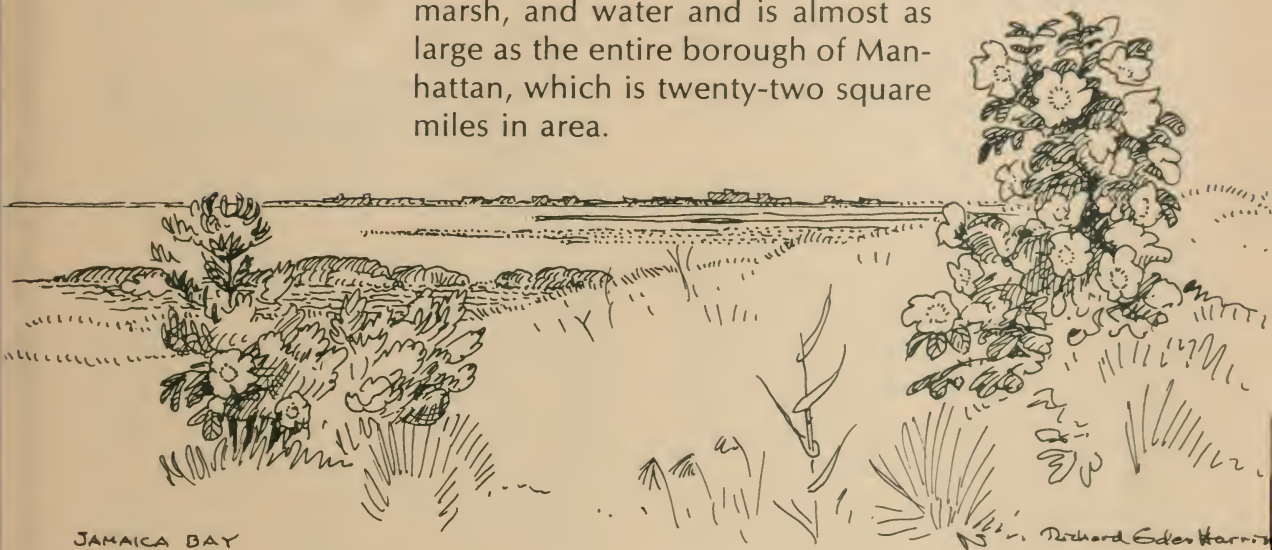
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Jamaica Bay Park

Jamaica Bay is located in the boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens, between Shore Parkway on the north and the Rockaway Peninsula on the south, between John F. Kennedy Airport on the east and Floyd Bennett Field on the west. This encompasses more than eighteen square miles of island, sandy upland, tidal marsh, and water and is almost as large as the entire borough of Manhattan, which is twenty-two square miles in area.



JAMAICA BAY

Richard Eden Harris

Most of the bay, except for a peripheral navigation channel and parts of Broad Channel Island, is a New York City park of more than 9,151 acres of underwater and upland terrain. Practically all of the bay offers excellent habitat for birds. But the most intensively managed birding area is located on the northern part of Broad Channel Island.

The Refuge

This Wildlife Refuge, established in 1953, owes its development in large part to the efforts of Herbert Johnson, the Park Department employee directly responsible for its care since its inception. Encompassing two fresh-water ponds—on either side of Cross Bay Boulevard, it is approximately one mile north of the Broad Channel IND station. The East Pond (east of Cross Bay Boulevard) is one hundred acres in extent, and is kept in a predominantly natural condition. The West Pond, of about forty acres, is on the opposite side of the boulevard and is encompassed by a two mile path. It is here that an intensive planting program is being carried on to provide food, cover, and nesting areas attractive to land birds. On the west side of this pond terns and skimmers have established a nesting area.

The Wildlife

Since Jamaica Bay is in the Atlantic Flyway, it has proved beneficial to a great variety of waterfowl, land and shore birds. Many species of ducks, such as scaup, baldpate, and pintail, stop for visits of varying lengths of time depending on season, weather conditions, and other factors.

The number of Canada geese and snow geese visiting the Refuge has increased each year. A number of blue geese have also been observed. Breeding birds of the Refuge have come in greater numbers since its creation. Black duck, ruddy duck, grebes, coot, and gallinule breed extensively; gadwall, blue and green wing teal and shovelers are common nesting birds. Red-head and baldpate also nested in 1961, a new record for the region. Redhead continue to nest in increasing numbers each year.

A heron roost is occupied by black crown, yellow crown, great and little blue and green herons, as well as an occasional Louisiana heron. Prominent in this area are common and snowy egrets. The population and nesting activities of these species have been increasing in a spectacular manner. Three pairs of

glossy ibis nested in the Refuge in 1961. In the past two years, the number of nesting ibis approached 100 pairs.

In the 1930's the brant were faced with a complete loss of food due to the blight on eel grass, which resulted in many dying from starvation. But these birds have now adapted their eating habits so that they feed eagerly on sea lettuce, a marine algae which grows extensively and covers the bottom of Jamaica Bay.

Bird watching opportunities are best during the spring and fall; however the other seasons can present an interesting variety of birds. Plantings and wildlife provide combinations suitable for nature study, ornithology, photography, sketching, or scientific study. Fishing is permitted in the salt water of the bay.



The Vegetation

The vegetation in the Refuge has changed significantly in amount and variety since the New York City Park Department began its intensive planting program in 1953. Plants were chosen on the basis of providing food and cover for wildlife, and erosion control for the loose sand which had to be "tied down". Only plants capable of growing in the sand and withstanding the extreme weather conditions could be introduced.



Autumn olive, with its attractive pink berries in the fall provides food for over forty species of birds. It grows profusely and has the quality of being able to withstand extremes of drought, heat and cold, and the salt air. Another important food plant is Japanese black pine, the predominant evergreen in the Refuge; winter finches come in great numbers to eat the seeds found in its cones, especially when the food supply is low farther north. Red cedar, a tall, narrow evergreen, provides food mainly for cedar waxwings, and is an excellent nesting tree for other species.

Other important food plants are *rosa rugosa*, which is very attractive when in bloom, chokeberry both red and black, and bayberry, whose waxy berries provide food especially for warblers, swallows and quail. The holly trees are expected to bear fruit in the next few years.

Two types of grasses predominate around the West Pond: The tall marsh grass, phragmites, is an excellent cover for ducks; the short grass planted on either side of the pathway is beach grass, which is important in terms of stabilizing the sand.

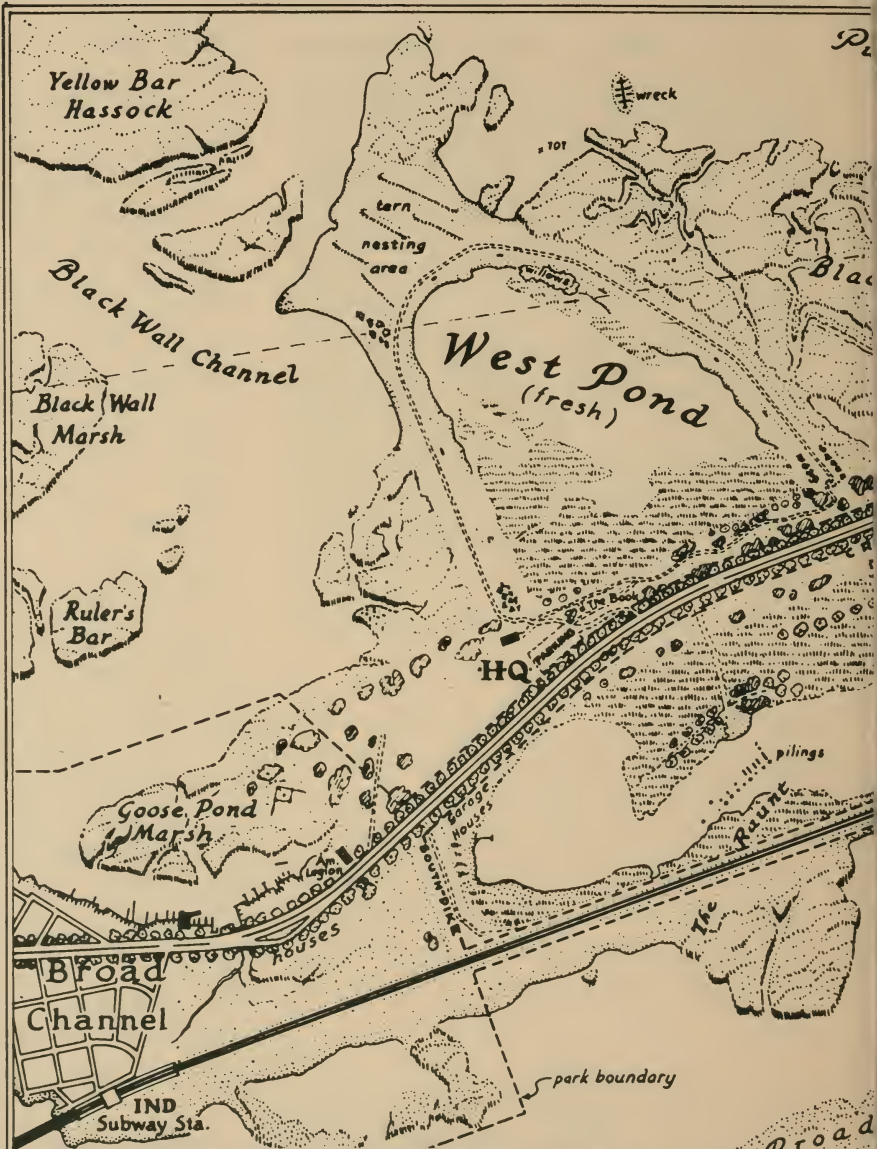
Directions

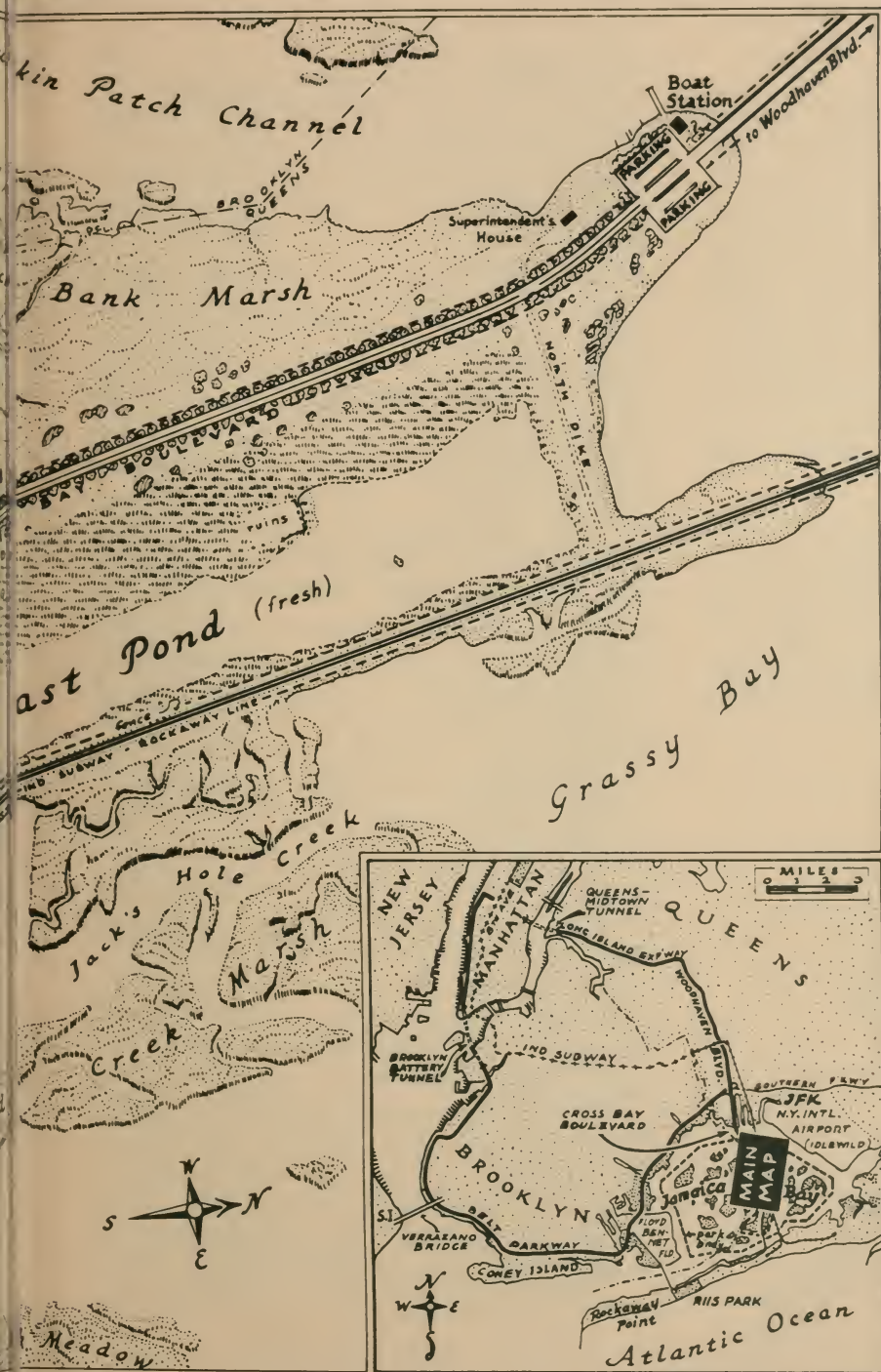
To reach the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge by automobile take the Shore Parkway, Southern Parkway, or Woodhaven Boulevard to Cross Bay Boulevard (the main highway to the Rockaways). Drive south on Cross Bay Boulevard. Approximately one and a half miles past the North Channel Bridge a parking field is maintained west of the road where visitors may enter the main birding area.

The Refuge may also be reached by IND subway on the "A", "E" or "HH" train serving the Rockaways. Leave the train at Broad Channel station, walk west to Cross Bay Boulevard, then walk north approximately three-fourths of a mile. Main birding area is on west side of Cross Bay Boulevard next to the parking lot.

A permit is required for the use of the wildlife area. This may be obtained free of charge by writing to:

Director, Maintenance and Operations
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Affairs
Administration
The Arsenal
830 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10021





List of Birds

The following list of birds that have been observed at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge contains 257 species, and is based on reliable observations of competent bird watchers and Refuge personnel. Check marks indicate the season that the species may be most readily observed. However, these same species may be seen at other times of the year as well.

Another list of 53 species, which are rare, or have occurred accidentally, has been added on the last page. Total number of species observed at the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge to date is 310.



		Sp	Su	F	W
	Common Loon	c		o	o
	Red-throated Loon	o		o	r
	Red-necked Grebe	r		r	
	Horned Grebe	c		c	c
	Eared Grebe			r	r
*	Pied-billed Grebe	c	u	c	u
	Double-crested Cormorant	u	o	c	o
	Great Blue Heron	c	r	c	r
*	Common Egret (American)	c	c	c	r
*	Snowy Egret	c	c	c	r
*	Louisiana Heron	o	o	o	
*	Little Blue Heron	o	o	o	
*	Green Heron	c	c	c	
*	Black-crowned Night Heron	c	c	c	o
*	Yellow-crowned Night Heron	o	o	o	
*	American Bittern	c	o	c	o
*	Least Bittern	o	o	o	
*	Eastern Glossy Ibis	c	c	c	
*	Canada Goose	c	o	c	o
	Brant	a	o	a	a
	Snow Goose	o		o	o
	Blue Goose	r		r	r
*	Mallard	c	c	c	c
*	Black Duck	a	a	a	a
*	Gadwall	c	c	o	o
	European Widgeon	r		r	r
*	Baldpate	a	o	a	c
*	Pin tail	c	o	c	c
*	Green-winged teal	c	o	c	r
*	Blue-winged teal	c	o	c	r
*	Shoveler	c	o	c	o
*	Wood Duck	r	r	r	
*	Redhead	c		c	u
	Ring-necked Duck	r		r	
	Canvasback Duck	c	o	o	c
	Greater Scaup	a	o	a	a
	Lesser Scaup	u	r	c	c

	Sp	Su	F	W
American Goldeneye	c		o	o
Bufflehead	a		o	a
Oldsquaw			r	r
White-winged Scoter			r	r
Surf Scoter			r	r
American Scoter			r	r
Ruddy Duck	c	c	c	o
Hooded Merganser	u		u	o
American Merganser	c		o	u
Red-breasted Merganser	c	r	c	c
Sharp-shinned Hawk	r		r	
Red-tailed Hawk	r		r	
Red-shouldered Hawk	r		r	
Broad-winged Hawk	r		r	
Rough-legged Hawk	r		r	r
* Marsh Hawk	u		u	u
Osprey	o		o	
Duck Hawk	o		o	o
Pigeon Hawk	u		u	
* Sparrow Hawk	c	o	c	c
* Bobwhite	a	a	a	a
* Ring-necked Pheasant	r		r	
King Rail	o		o	
* Clapper Rail	c	c	c	u
Virginia Rail	o	r	o	
* Sora	o	o	o	
* Common Gallinule	c	c	c	
* Coot	a	a	a	a
* Piping Plover	c	c	r	
Semipalmated Plover	a	a	a	
* Killdeer	c	c	c	o
Golden Plover	r		o	
Black-bellied Plover	c	o	c	r
Ruddy Turnstone	c	u	c	
* Woodcock	r	r	r	
Wilson's Snipe	r		r	
Hudsonian Curlew	r	r	r	

Status

Column 1 (Sp)

Spring: March-May

Column 2 (Su)

Summer: June-August

Column 3 (F)

Fall: September-November

Column 4 (W)

Winter: December-February

Abundance

a—abundant

c—common

u—uncommon

o—occasional

r—rare

* indicates species nested

		Sp	Su	F	W
	Upland Plover	r	r	r	
*	Spotted Sandpiper	c	c	c	
	Solitary Sandpiper	o		o	
	Willet	r	r	r	
	Greater Yellowlegs	a	a	a	r
	Lesser Yellowlegs	a	a	a	
	Knot	c	o	c	
	Pectoral Sandpiper	u		c	
	White-rumped Sandpiper	u	o	c	
	Least Sandpiper	a	c	a	
	Red-backed Sandpiper	c		c	o
	Long-billed Dowitcher		o	o	
	Short-billed Dowitcher	a	a	a	
	Stilt Sandpiper		o	u	
	Semipalmated Sandpiper	a	a	a	
	Western Sandpiper			o	
	Marbled Godwit		r	r	
	Hudsonian Godwit		r	r	
	Sanderling	c	c	c	o
	Red Phalarope	r		r	
	Wilson's Phalarope	o	o	o	
	Northern Phalarope	o		o	
	Glaucous Gull	o			o
	Iceland Gull	o			o
*	Great Black-backed Gull	a	a	a	a
*	Herring Gull	a	a	a	a
*	Ring-billed Gull	c	c	c	c
	Laughing Gull	c	o	c	
	Bonaparte's Gull	o		o	r
	Forster's Tern		o	o	
*	Common Tern	a	a	a	
	Caspian Tern		r	r	
	Roseate Tern	r	r	r	
*	Least Tern	c	c	c	
	Black Tern	o	o	u	
*	Black Skimmer	a	a	a	
	Rock Dove	c	c	c	c

		Sp	Su	F	W
*	Mourning Dove	c	c	c	o
	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	o		o	
*	Black-billed Cuckoo	o	o	o	
	Barn Owl	r	r	r	r
	Snowy Owl	r			r
	Long-eared Owl			r	r
*	Short-eared Owl	u		u	u
	Saw-whet Owl			o	o
	Whip-poor-will			r	
	Nighthawk	r	r	r	
	Chimney Swift	u	r	u	
	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	r	r	r	
	Belted Kingfisher		o	o	r
*	Flicker	a	u	a	r
	Red-headed Woodpecker	r		r	
	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	o		o	
	Hairy Woodpecker			o	o
	Downy Woodpecker	u	u	u	u
*	Eastern Kingbird	o	o	o	
	Western Kingbird			r	
	Crested Flycatcher	o	o	o	
	Phoebe	o		c	
	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	o		o	
	Acadian Flycatcher	o		o	
	Alder Flycatcher	o		o	
	Least Flycatcher	o		o	
	Wood Peewee	o		u	
	Olive-sided Flycatcher	r		r	
*	Horned Lark	c	u	c	c
*	Tree Swallow	a	a	a	
	Bank Swallow	o	o		
	Rough-winged Swallow	o	o	o	
	Barn Swallow	c	u	c	
	Cliff Swallow	r		r	
	Purple Martin	r	r	r	
	Blue Jay	c		c	
	Crow	r	r	r	

		Sp	Su	F	W
*	Fish Crow	u	u	u	
	Black-capped Chickadee	o		o	r
	White-breasted Nuthatch	o		o	
	Red-breasted Nuthatch	u		u	
	Brown Creeper	o		o	
	House Wren	o	o	o	
	Winter Wren	o		o	
	Carolina Wren	r		r	
*	Long-billed Marsh Wren	c	c	c	o
	Short-billed Marsh Wren	r	r	r	
*	Mockingbird	c	c	c	o
*	Catbird	c	c	c	r
*	Brown Thrasher	c	c	c	
*	Robin	c	c	a	r
	Wood Thrush	u		u	
	Hermit Thrush	u		u	
	Olive-backed Thrush	u		u	
	Gray-cheeked Thrush	u		u	
	Veery	r		u	
	Eastern Bluebird	r		r	
	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	o		r	
	Golden-crowned Kinglet	c		a	
	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	c		a	
	American Pipit	o		o	r
	Cedar Waxwing	o	c	c	
	Northern Shrike			r	r
	Loggerhead Shrike	r		r	r
	Starling	a	a	a	a
	White-eyed Vireo	r		r	
	Solitary Vireo	r		r	
	Red-eyed Vireo	u		u	
	Philadelphia Vireo	r		r	
	Warbling Vireo	r		r	
	Black-and-White Warbler	c		c	
	Worm-eating Warbler	r		r	
	Blue-winged Warbler	u		u	
	Golden-winged Warbler	r		r	

Status

Column 1 (Sp)

Spring: March-May

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Column 4 (W)

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Abundance

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* indicates species nested

		Sp	Su	F	W
	Tennessee Warbler	r		o	
	Orange-crowned Warbler	r		r	
	Nashville Warbler	c		c	
	Parula Warbler	c		c	
*	Yellow Warbler	c	c	u	
	Magnolia Warbler	c		c	
	Cape May Warbler	o		o	
	Black-throated Blue Warbler	o		o	
	Myrtle Warbler	c		a	o
	Black-throated Green Warbler	u		u	
	Blackburnian Warbler	o		o	
	Chestnut-sided Warbler	u		u	
	Bay-breasted Warbler	o		o	
	Pine Warbler	r		r	
	Blackpoll Warbler	c		c	
	Prairie Warbler	u		u	
	Palm Warbler	c		c	
	Ovenbird	o		o	
	Northern Waterthrush	o		o	
	Louisiana Waterthrush	r		r	
	Mourning Warbler	r		r	
	Connecticut Warbler	r		r	
*	Yellowthroat	c	c	c	
	Yellow-breasted Chat	o		o	
	Hooded Warbler	r		r	
	Wilson's Warbler	o		u	
	Canada Warbler	u		u	
	American Redstart	c		c	
	Bobolink	r	o	o	
	Meadowlark	o		u	
*	Red-winged Blackbird	a	a	a	o
	Orchard Oriole	r		r	
	Baltimore Oriole	u		u	
	Rusty Blackbird	u		u	
*	Purple Grackle	a	a	a	o
	Bronzed Grackle	o		o	r
*	Cowbird	c	o	o	o

		Sp	Su	F	W
	Scarlet Tanager	r		r	
	Summer Tanager	r		r	
	Cardinal	r		r	
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	o		o	
	Indigo Bunting	o		o	
	Dickcissel	r		r	r
	Evening Grosbeak	r		r	r
*	House Finch	c	c	c	c
	Purple Finch	r		o	o
	Pine Grosbeak			r	r
	Redpoll				r
	Pine Siskin			u	o
*	Goldfinch	u	r	u	u
	Red Crossbill			o	o
	White-winged Crossbill			o	o
*	Eastern Towhee	c	c	c	
	Ipswich Sparrow	o			o
*	Savannah Sparrow	c	o	c	u
	Sharp-tailed Sparrow	o	r	o	r
*	Seaside Sparrow	o	c	c	r
	Vesper Sparrow	r			r
	Slate-colored Junco	c		c	o
	Tree Sparrow	o		o	c
	Chipping Sparrow	o		c	
	Field Sparrow	o		o	
	White-crowned Sparrow	o		o	
	White-throated Sparrow	c		a	o
	Fox Sparrow	o		o	o
	Grasshopper Sparrow	r		r	
	Lincoln's Sparrow	o		o	
	Swamp Sparrow	o	r	c	r
*	House Sparrow	c	c	c	c
*	Song Sparrow	c	c	c	c
	Lapland Longspur			u	o
	Snow Bunting	o		u	o

Accidental List

WHITE PELICAN	AVOCET
EUROPEAN CORMORANT	BLACK-HEADED GULL
CATTLE EGRET	LITTLE GULL
WOOD IBIS	ARCTIC TERN
MUTE SWAN	GULL-BILLED TERN
WHISTLING SWAN	ROYAL TERN
FULVOUS TREE DUCK	HORNED OWL
EUROPEAN TEAL	AMERICAN MAGPIE
CINNAMON TEAL	PROTHONOTARY WARBLER
BARROW'S GOLDENEYE	CERULEAN WARBLER
COMMON EIDER	KENTUCKY WARBLER
TURKEY VULTURE	BLUE GROSBEAK
GOSHAWK	GRASSHOPPER SPARROW
COOPER'S HAWK	BAIRD'S SPARROW
BALD EAGLE	LARK SPARROW
GYRAFALCON	OREGON JUNCO
YELLOW RAIL	CHESTNUT COLLARED LONGSPUR
BLACK RAIL	LARK BUNTING
PURPLE GALLINULE	BAHAMA PINTAIL
OYSTERCATCHER	BAR-HEADED GOOSE (probable escape)
WILSON'S PLOVER	EUROPEAN RED-WING THRUSH
PURPLE SANDPIPER	SPUR-WINGED PLOVER (confirmed escape)
BAIRD'S SANDPIPER	CLAY-COLORED SPARROW
CURLEW SANDPIPER	KING EIDER
BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER	TOWNSEND'S WARBLER
WHITE IBIS	YELLOW-THROATED
RUFF	WARBLER

Status

Column 1 (**Sp**)

Spring: March-May

Column 2 (**Su**)

Summer: June-August

Column 3 (**F**)

Fall: September-November

Column 4 (**W**)

Winter: December-February

Abundance

a—abundant

c—common

u—uncommon

o—occasional

r—rare

* indicates species nested

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